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MATERIAL CULTURE

HABITATIONS

342 Dwellings in the Plateau fall into three general classes: the earth lodge, the mat lodge, and the tipi. The earth lodge assumes a number of distinctive forms. These vary from a cave-like excavation, among the Carrier, to a flat topped pit, in parts of the southern Plateau. Thus the term semi-subterranean lodge, often used, is inapplicable as a generic designation. The circular pit covered with a conical roof is the commonest form encountered in the area, with its highest development in the north central region.

The mat covered lodge is widely distributed and exists side by side with the earth lodge. The name is not distinctive, but several of the forms which this type of dwelling assumes in the Plateau are definitely characteristic of the area. The commonest type presents an inverted-V lateral cross-section with a rectangular ground plan, or a plan with rounded ends. The mats are more often sewn than woven; the material is unusually cattail or tule.

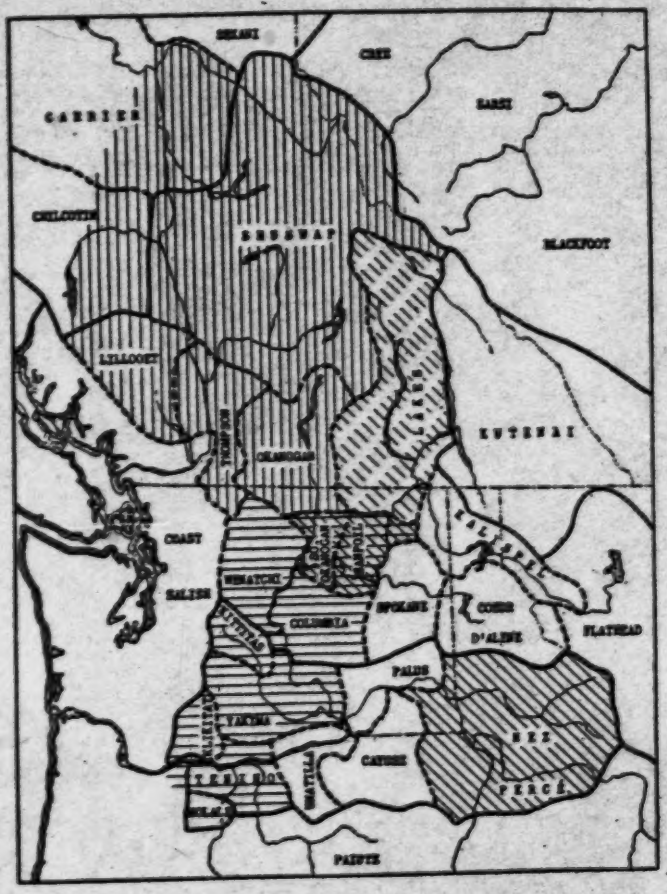
The tipi, an obviously intrusive form, is found only among the Kutenai and Flathead as a typical dwelling. Another intrusive form, the plank house, is frequently used by the Lower Lillooet and western Carrier and occurred in earlier times along the Columbia River as far east as the Nez Percé.

The Earth Lodge

The subterranean dwelling has a wide distribution in northwestern America, and again in northeastern Asia. Jochelson attacked the problem of relationship between these two areas,[1] and later Waterman gave the question further attention. Waterman concludes: "The fairest inference from the available evidence seems to be that the pit-lodges at least of extreme western North America represent the spreading of an idea from one common center."[2] Of Jochelson's assumption that earth lodges in America are generically related to those of Asia, Waterman states that the theory is now "somewhat more persuasive."[3] It should be added that Waterman posits a relationship between the subterranean dwelling and the plank houses of the Northwest Coast, since the latter

[1] Jochelson, *Subterranean Dwellings.*
[2] Waterman and Collaborators, *Native Houses*, p. 42.
[3] *Idem*, p. 15.

are sometimes built over pits. Olson presents convincing arguments to the contrary in his study of the plank houses of the Northwest Coast.[4] Data from the Plateau, to the degree applicable, support Olson in his contention. (One exception is noted below.)



MAP 18. Earth lodges. *Vertical hatching:* circular, with rafters; *horizontal hatching:* circular, roof of radiating poles; *diagonal hatching:* circular, flat roof; *broken hatching:* circular, radiating poles with purlins.

But the present problem is that of a narrower area. The variations of the earth lodge within the Plateau are considerable. The pit may be either circular or square, the roof conical, pyramidal, or flat, and the

[4] Olson, *Adze, Canoe and House Types*, pp. 26–30.

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342 entrance at the center or edge. Further, the side entrance may be on the surface or in the form of a tunnel. These are not, however, randomly combined.

The exclusive type in the northwestern Plateau (Okanogan, Thompson, Lillooet, Shuswap, Chilcotin), excepting the Carrier, is the circular pit with pyramidal roof. The pyramidal form comes primarily from the use of hip rafters running from the edge of the pit to an opening at the top. The upper ends of these rafters usually rest upon vertical supporting posts. Thus the number of central posts is necessarily equal to the number of hip rafters. All use four logs to form a square hatchway. In addition, the Shuswap sometimes use six, forming a hexagonal opening which is in effect round. Likewise, the six planes of the roof present the effect of a cone when covered with earth. The four hip rafters of the Lillooet house, however, do not rest upon center posts at the upper ends. Instead, rafter struts are used, sloping diagonally inward from the middle of the rafter to the floor of the pit. The Lillooet house differs in yet another respect. The lower ends of the rafters are not set on the edge of the pit, but rather in the angle at the bottom edge of the excavation. The result is a squarish floor plan. The hatchway is sometimes a rectangle with the long side twice the dimension of the short one. This opening is divided in the middle with a log, forming two square hatchways. The exterior shape is modified, becoming more wedge-like. The Okanogan probably shared this type of house. In their case the rafters may have been set at the edge of the pit rather than at the bottom of it.[5] If this be true, it would provide a bit of evidence to bolster Waterman's argument.

The Carrier used an earth lodge identical with the four pole type of the Shuswap. Morice categorically states that it was borrowed from the Shuswap,[6] an interpretation with which members of both tribes agree. In addition they use a type of dwelling which may perhaps be called an earth lodge, but not a subterranean house. It is essentially an artificial cave hollowed from a hill side. The cavity is increased in size by building a frame of logs in front of the opening and covering this with the excavated earth. The walls of the extension slope from a rectangular roof to the ground. The doorway is at ground level, opposite the back of the excavation. This structure appears to be a local development, perhaps quite recent. There are no parallels among neighboring

[5] Cline, *Southern Okanagon*, pp. 40 f. The informant's statements were equivocal.
[6] Morice, *Notes on the Western Dénés*, p. 191.

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peoples. It may be suggested that this is a combination of the log structure of the upper Fraser and the idea of the earth covered lodge. 342

The Lakes pit lodge differs considerably from those of the Shuswap and other neighbors. A roof of radiating poles is encountered here, a type of construction dominant to the south. The central posts are likewise absent. The roof is sufficiently steep so that the radiating poles maintain their positions after being anchored in the ground and tied to the hatchway frame. The foundation poles are spaced about four feet at the base. These are crossed by horizontal purlins or hoops, both inside and out. Then stub rafters are placed and covering material added.

In the western half of the American Plateau (Sanpoil, Southern Okanogan, Wenatchi, Columbia, Kittitas, Yakima, Klikitat, Tenino, Wishram, Klamath[7]) the circular pit with a conical roof of radiating poles is universal. The central poles vary in number (Sanpoil: one; Tenino, Klamath: four) or may be absent entirely (Sanpoil), as in the Lakes house. The Klamath lodge is the most specialized. It is provided with an elongated hatchway supported by four vertical posts and four rafters. The result is a wedge shaped appearance. This method of constructing the framework is reminiscent of the northwestern Plateau; the wedge shape parallels that of the Lillooet. But an equally intimate similarity is found much nearer by, in northern and central California. Central posts, rafters, and the wedge shape are all present south of the Klamath. However, the particular combination effected by the Klamath is more closely approached in the north than anywhere in California, unless it be by the adjacent Modoc. The use of rafters is definitely absent from the Canadian line southward to the Klamath.

An essentially distinct type of earth lodge may be represented by the square pit of the Kittitas, Wenatchi, and Southern Okanogan. In all cases this lodge is supplementary to that built with a round pit. It may be nothing more than the tendency toward squareness, as in the Lillooet house, carried to the extreme. On the other hand, the four rafter foundation, which predisposes toward a square pit, is lacking in at least all recent forms. This, together with the restricted local distribution, suggests a development on the spot.

The opening at the side or edge is another new feature encountered in the square earth lodge; an entry at top center is never used. But the side entrance is not limited to the square lodge; it is utilized with the round pit by the Sanpoil, Wenatchi, Kittitas, Klikitat, Tenino, and

[7] Cline, *loc. cit.*; Spier and Sapir, *Wishram Ethnography*, pp. 202 f.

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342 Nez Percé. Only among the Wenatchi and Kittitas is this the exclusive type; all others use the center hatchway for circular pit dwellings as well, despite Teit's declaration to the contrary.[8]

The side entrance is limited, among the Sanpoil and Nez Percé, to another lodge type, a pit with a flat roof. As built by the Sanpoil and Southern Okanogan, this lodge consists of a circular pit, flat roof, side entrance, and serves as a secondary type of dwelling. The Nez Percé, however, use this lodge only as a sudatory or for menstrual isolation. It is the only earth lodge known to the Nez Percé.[9]

The side entrance is unquestionably characteristic of the American Plateau as opposed to the exclusive use of the top central opening in the Canadian area. But the side entrance finds widespread utilization in California and again in Alaska, and the central hatchway is known from Siberia to the American Southwest. The local relationship of the two forms would be simplified if the side opening were associated only with the flat roof. It is better adapted to such a roof than is a central entry. But the Wenatchi and Kittitas, who lack the flat roof type, utilize the side opening exclusively for their conical roofed lodges. Hence we may be dealing with an architectural specialization locally developed.

Other local variations in the south central Plateau, particularly the flat roof and simple conical roof of radiating poles, appear as imperfect imitations of outside types or deteriorated examples of older types. The hip rafter foundation and the sloping roof are structurally far superior to the radiating pole foundation and the flat roof. Yet the superior types are found consistently in the north, and again in the extreme south. Suggestive of the possibly older type are the four central posts, maintained, for example, by the Tenino.

It may well be that these less satisfactory forms have become so only very recently. In British Columbia the earth lodge continued in use until late in the last century. On the American side, in contrast, it was going out of existence before the whites entered the scene. The consistent native comment is that the earth lodge was the "old type" of dwelling, at one time the exclusive winter habitat. Gradually, over a long period, it is explained, the earth lodge was supplanted by the mat covered dwelling, so the latter was in virtually exclusive use in the late nineteenth century. As the earth lodge became more and more obsolete, it seems reasonable that it would have been made with less

[8] Teit, *Salishan Tribes*, pp. 227, 331.

[9] Cline, *loc. cit.*; Spinden, *Nez Perce Indians*, p. 198.

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and less care. The reason for this transition is problematical. It may have been associated with the coming of the horse and the greater mobility, even in wintertime, thus made possible. The winter mat lodge is designed as a stationary structure, but can be moved, and is characteristically re-erected each year. The earth lodge requires maintenance of residence in the same spot each winter if it is to be utilized.

Mat Lodges

The mat lodges of the Plateau fall naturally into groups based on ground plans and cross-sections. Other features are less definitive, both as to type and distribution. Framework, for example, varies in many respects, of which only a few are fundamental; most of these variations are local. The covering, on the other hand, is similar over the entire area. The mats are of rushes which are usually sewn, but sometimes twined or partly twined. Cattail or tule is used depending largely upon availability; tule is the more widespread. Grass mats are occasionally used by the Shuswap.

The ground plan has three essential variants: (1) rectangular; (2) parallel sides with rounded ends; (3) rectangular with one end rounded. Associated with any one of these plans may be either of the two cross-section types: inverted-V, and gabled with vertical walls. (The other logical variation, shed roof, is not found.) Specific combinations of plan and section present fairly exclusive distributions.

The Canadian area, excepting the Lakes, is characterized by the lodge of rectangular plan and inverted-V section, or wedge shape. The side walls slope from ridge to ground; the ends are vertical. Other shapes are not unknown, especially among the Carrier, where historic time has seen importations from all directions. Thus the vertical side wall with gable roof is found there, and the possibly related plank house of the same shape. The Northwest Coast origin of these innovations is obvious.

The great bulk of the American Plateau, together with the Lakes, utilize an inverted-V section with both ends rounded to form half-circles. These ends are constructed by placing radiating poles from the end of the ridge to an arc on the ground. A second type found in this area, but with a more restricted distribution, is logically intermediate between the rectangular plan and that with rounded ends. One end is rounded, the other square. This variant has a narrow distribution in the south central Plateau (Yakima, Columbia?).

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A structure with plan and section identical to the last is found far north among the Carrier. This might be dismissed as an independent variation upon the rectangular plan, were it not for another feature which likewise duplicates southern practice. The rounded end is sepa-

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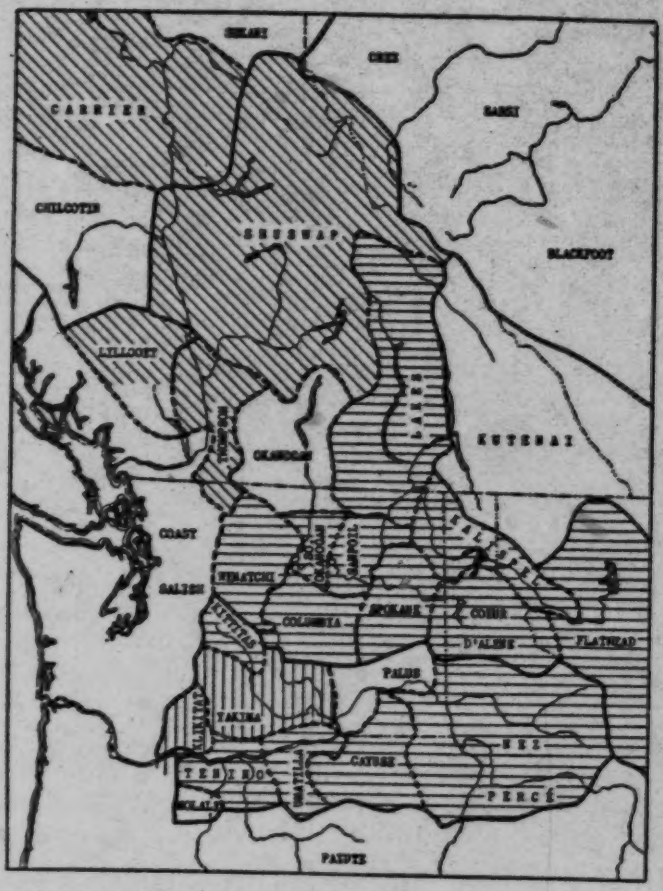

MAP. 19. Mat lodges. *Diagonal hatching:* inverted-V section, rectangular plan; *horizontal hatching:* inverted-V section, plan with parallel sides and rounded ends; *vertical hatching:* vertical walls, gable roof.

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rated from the main body of the house by a partition directly below the end of the ridge, making the room itself rectangular in plan. A door is provided in the middle of this wall and another in the rounded outside wall directly opposite. Two compartments are thus formed, one on

1: Ray E-5 (1928-38) 1939 Plateau

either side of the entrance aisle connecting the doors. These quarter-circle areas are used for storage, as dog kennels, and the like. The partition and double doors are very effective in keeping out the cold. In both areas the arrangements and explanations as to function are identical. In the south the end compartment is not limited to houses with one end rounded. The same arrangement is found in one or both ends of houses with double rounding. The Carrier lodge differs in certain other aspects of construction, as might be expected. Rafter struts are used and the covering is of bark, brush, poles, etc.[10] Whether these geographically remote examples are genetically related, remains to be answered. A general relation seems reasonable in view of the continuous distribution of the wedge shaped dwelling but the specific features of rounding and compartments demand further study.

Still another type appears with the Yakima, Klikitat, and Wishram.[11] This is the structure with vertical walls and gable roof. The plank house of the Coast was once common among the Wishram and even farther up the Columbia River. It can hardly be doubted that the present form of the mat house is derived from these earlier plank structures. But the Yakima houses, at least, have the further feature of rounded ends. This indicates a combination of two discrete types.

The Klamath mat lodge is a somewhat circular structure built essentially upon the plan of the earth lodge. Conical mat lodges are common throughout most of the Plateau, but the Klamath structure is something more than that. Of especial interest is the fact that a mat is sometimes hung inside the structure so that a sort of partition is formed between the main portion of the house and rounded end. Since the occupants are thus protected from the outside doorway, it functions like the central Plateau or Carrier partition.[12]

The rounded ends of the mat house of the southern Plateau may hold the secret to the history of these structures. Several interpretations are possible. This type may be the rectangular lodge with radiating poles added at the ends to form the compartments and protect the occupants. Or more fundamentally, a structural limitation may be involved. With a ridge pole in place, side poles may be leaned against it with ease, and may be made fast with but little tying. To construct vertical end walls is somewhat more difficult and involves a different principle.

[10] Morice, *Notes on the Western Dénés*, pp. 189 ff.
[11] Spier and Sapir, *loc. cit.*
[12] Spier, *Klamath Ethnography*, p. 202.

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342 If, instead, the side wall pattern of sloping poles is maintained, the end becomes rounded automatically. Finally, the structure may be essentially the expanded tipi. If a tipi be divided vertically in halves and spread, a lodge with parallel sides and rounded ends is automatically obtained. The principal argument in favor of this interpretation is present day practice of the Flathead. To form their "long house" they erect two tipi frames at the proper distance, set a ridge pole from one to the other, add intermediate poles, and place the covering. Against this interpretation are several technical aspects of construction. The typical lodge of the Plateau is not, in fact, two tipis with connecting poles.

So much for the possibilities. The final answer must be based upon the examination of many more details of construction than those presented here, and the consideration of forms over a greater area than the Plateau alone.

BOATS AND CANOES

501 Canoes of the dugout type occur in all parts of the Plateau except among the Flathead. In the Flathead area only the bark canoe, in the west, and the bull boat, in the east, are known. In the northern part of the Plateau the dugout is of distinctly secondary importance, with the bark canoe in first place. The Shuswap and Chilcotin say that the dugout is recent, or at least that it was rare before the coming of metal tools. But all are acquainted with methods of hollowing by burning, except the Kutenai. Hence it seems unlikely that metal tools effected a wholly novel innovation, but rather that they merely increased the use of dugouts. The bark canoes continued to hold first place; the appearance is not that of the introduction of a whole new complex. Teit has asserted that dugout canoes were unknown to the Coeur d'Alêne, Spokane, Kalispel, and Sanpoil.[13] This is explicitly and consistently denied today by informants from all these groups. They have no difficulty in providing information as to ancient techniques; the descriptions are technically plausible and fit into the regional pattern. As far as the Sanpoil are concerned, Teit's information is unquestionably in error. They not only had dugouts but used them extensively. Furthermore, the types built were quite specialized; one was a shovel-nose type with flat, projecting prow and stern; the other was provided with a sharp bow and stern.[14]

Olson has classified the canoes of the Northwest into three types of a general nature.

[13] Teit, *Salishan Tribes*, pp. 108, 248, 350. [14] Ray, *Sanpoil and Nespelem*, pp. 118 f.

5: Bancroft H-4 (no date) 1883 Plateau

The inland dwelling is a frame of poles, covered with rush matting, or with the skins of the buffalo or elk. As a rule the richest tribes and individuals use skins, although many of the finest Sahaptin houses are covered with mats only. Notwithstanding these nations are rich in horses, I find no mention that horse-hides are ever employed for this or any other purpose. The form of the lodge is that of a tent, conical or oblong, and usually sharp at the top, where an open space is left for light and air to enter, and smoke to escape. Their internal condition presents a marked contrast with that of the Chinook and Nootka habitations, since they are by many interior tribes kept free from vermin and filth. Their light material and the frequency with which their location is changed contributes to this result. The lodges are pitched by the women, who acquire great skill and celerity in the work. Holes are left along the sides for entrance, and within, a floor of sticks is laid, or more frequently the ground is spread with mats, and skins serve for beds. Dwellings are often built sufficiently large to accommodate many families, each of which in such case has its own fireplace on a central longitudinal line, a definite space being allotted for its goods, but no dividing partitions are ever used. The dwellings are

kima to the Okanagan the men go naked, and the women wear only a belt with a slip passing between the legs. *Cox's Adven.*, vol. i., pp. 133, 148, 240–1, vol. ii., p. 144. Nez Percés better clad than any others, Cayuses well clothed, Walla Wallas naked and half starved. *Palmer's Jour.*, pp. 54, 124, 127–8. At the Dalles, women 'go nearly naked, for they wear little else than what may be termed a breech-cloth, of buckskin, which is black and filthy with dirt.' *Wilkes' Nar.*, in *U. S. Ex. Ex.*, vol. iv., pp. 409–10, 426, 473. The Kliketat women wear a short pine-bark petticoat tied round the loins. *Townsend's Nar.*, pp. 78, 178, 148. 'Their buffaloe robes and other skins they chiefly procure on the Missouri, when they go over to hunt, as there are no buffaloe in this part of the country and very little other game.' *Gass' Jour.*, pp. 189, 205, 218–19, 295. Tusshepaw 'women wore caps of willow neatly worked and figured.' *Irving's Astoria*, pp. 315, 317, 319; *Id., Bonneville's Adven.*, p. 301. The Flathead women wear straw hats, used also for drinking and cooking purposes. *De Smet, Voy.*, pp. 45–7, 198. The Shuahwaps wear in wet weather capes of bark trimmed with fur, and reaching to the elbows. Moccasins are more common than on the coast, but they often ride barefoot. *Mayne's B. C.*, p. 301. *Parker's Explor. Tour.*, pp. 279–80; *Kane's Wand.*, p. 264, and cut; *Fremont's Opn. and Cal.*, pp. 186–7; *Stevens*, in *Ind. Aff. Rept.*, 1854, p. 222; *Nicolay's Opn. Ter.*, p. 153; *Franchère's Nar.*, p. 268; *Dunn's Oregon*, p. 311; *Cole's Rocky Mts.*, p. 304; *Hunt*, in *Nouvelles Annales des Voy.*, tom. x., 1821, pp. 74–5, 78.

5: Bancroft H-4 (no date) 1883 Plateau

The dwellings are

342 arranged in small villages generally located in winter on
361 the banks of small streams a little away from the main rivers. For a short distance up the Columbia, houses similar to those of the Chinooks are built of split cedar and bark. The Walla Wallas, living in summer in the ordinary mat lodge, often construct for winter a subterranean abode by digging a circular hole ten or twelve feet deep, roofing it with poles or split cedar covered with grass and mud, leaving a small opening at the top for exit and entrance by means of a notched-log ladder. The Atnahs on Fraser River spend the winter in similar structures, a simple slant roof of mats or bark sufficing for shade and shelter in summer. The Okanagans construct their lodges over an excavation in the ground several feet deep, and like many other nations, cover their matting in winter with grass and earth.[122]

[122] The Sokulk houses 'generally of a square or oblong form, varying in length from fifteen to sixty feet, and supported in the inside by poles or forks about six feet high.' The roof is nearly flat. The Echeloot and Chilluckittequaw houses were of the Chinook style, partially sunk in the ground. The Nez Percés live in houses built 'of straw and mats, in the form of the roof of a house.' One of these 'was one hundred and fifty-six feet long, and about fifteen wide, closed at the ends, and having a number of doors on each side.' *Lewis and Clarke's Trav.*, pp. 340, 351, 369-70, 381-2, 540. Nez Percé dwellings twenty to seventy feet long and from ten to fifteen feet wide; free from vermin. Flathead houses conical but spacious, made of buffalo and moose skins over long poles. Spokane lodges oblong or conical, covered with skins or mats. *Cox's Adven.*, vol. i., pp. 148, 192, 200. Nez Percé and Cayuse lodges 'composed of ten long poles, the lower ends of which are pointed and driven into the ground; the upper blunt and drawn together at the top by thongs' covered with skins. 'Universally used by the mountain Indians while travelling.' Umatillas live in 'shantys or wigwams of driftwood, covered with buffalo or deer skins.' Klicatats 'in miserable loose hovels.' *Townsend's Nar.*, pp. 104-5, 156, 174. Okanagan winter lodges are long and narrow, 'chiefly of mats and poles, covered over with grass and earth;' dug one or two feet below the surface; look like the roof of a common house set on the ground. *Ross' Adven.*, pp. 313-4. On the Yakima River 'a small canopy, hardly sufficient to shelter a sheep, was found to contain four generations of human beings.' *Pickering's Races*, in *U. S. Ex. Ex.*, vol. ix., pp. 34, 37. On the Clearwater 'there are not more than four lodges in a place or village, and these small camps or villages are eight or ten miles apart.' 'Summer lodges are made of willows and flags, and their winter lodges of split pine.' *Gass' Jour.*, pp. 212, 221, 223. At Kettle Falls, the lodges are of rush mats.' 'A flooring is made of sticks, raised three or four feet from the ground, leaving the space beneath it entirely open, and forming a cool, airy, and shady place, in which to hang their salmon.' *Kane's Wand.*, pp. 309, 272-3. The Pend d'Oreilles roll their tent-mats into cylindrical bundles for convenience in traveling. *Stevens*, in *Ind. Aff. Rept.*, 1854, pp. 215, 238, 282. *Barnhart*, in *Id.*, 1862, p. 271. The Shushwap den is warm but 'necessarily unwholesome, and redolent....of anything but roses.' *Anderson*, in *Hist. Mag.*, vol. vii., p. 77. Yakimas, 'rude

[251]

5: Bancroft H-4 (no date) 1883 Plateau

The inland families eat fish and game, with roots and fruit; no nation subsists without all these supplies; but the proportion of each consumed varies greatly according to locality. Some tribes divide their forces regularly into bands, of men to fish and hunt, of women to cure fish and flesh, and to gather roots and berries. I have spoken of the coast tribes as a fish-eating, and the interior tribes as a hunting people, attributing in great degree their differences of person and character to their food, or rather to their methods of obtaining it; yet fish constitutes an important element of inland subsistence as well. Few tribes live altogether without salmon, the great staple of the Northwest; since those dwelling on streams inaccessible to the salmon by reason of intervening falls, obtain their supply by annual migrations to the fishing-grounds, or by trade with other nations. The principal salmon fisheries of the Columbia are at the Dalles, the falls ten miles above, and at Kettle Falls. Other productive stations are on the Powder, Snake, Yakima, Okanagan, and Clarke rivers. On the Fraser, which has no falls in its lower course, fishing is carried on all along the banks of the river instead of at regular stations, as on the Columbia. Nets, weirs, hooks, spears, and all the implements and methods by which fish are taken and cured have been sufficiently described in treating of the coast region;[1] in the interior I find no important variations except in the basket method in use at the Chaudières or Kettle Falls by the Quiarlpi tribe. Here an immense willow basket, often ten feet in diameter and twelve feet deep, is suspended at the falls from

huts covered with mats.' *Gibbs*, in *Pac. R. R. Rept.*, vol. i., p. 407. Shushwaps erect rude slants of bark or matting; have no tents or houses. *Milton and Cheadle's N. W. Pass.*, p. 242. From the swamps south of Flatbow Lake, 'the Kootanie Indians obtain the klusquis or thick reed, which is the only article that serves them in the construction of their lodges,' and is traded with other tribes. *Sullivan*, in *Palliser's Explor.*, p. 15. In winter the Salish cover their mats with earth. *Hale's Ethnog.*, in *U. S. Ex. Ex.*, vol. vi., p. 207. Flag huts of the Walla Wallas. *Farnham's Trav.*, p. 85; *Mullan's Rept*, pp. 49–50; *Palmer's Jour.*, p. 61; *Coke's Rocky Mts.*, p. 295; *Irving's Astoria*, pp. 315, 319; *Id., Bonneville's Adven.*, p. 301; *De Smet, Voy.*, p. 185; *Id., West. Missions*, p. 284; *Lord's Nat.*, vol. ii., pp. 105–6. *Hunt*, in *Nouvelles Annales des Voy.*, tom. x., 1821, pp. 74–5, 79.

[1] [See pp. 232-233, category 116-- Analyst]